



The Pitt-Bridge



Preparing STEM Leaders in Their Community

The **AIU MSC Pitt-Bridge** program is an extracurricular program that encourages students to learn 21st century skills through engagement in the health sciences. Its **VISION** is to excite underserved youth in STEM by engaging in health research in their community, become family health advocates, and improve community health. It does so through its **MISSION** to provide an opportunity for underserved youth to participate in health science clubs where rigorous experiential learning is conducted in an after-school setting. Pitt-Bridge clubs consist of a small group of youth who meet on a regular schedule and are engaged in authentic community-based health-science research, developing cognitive skills, including critical thinking, leadership and literacy, and social skills of curiosity, self-esteem, and self-empowerment to understand they can create change, and develop grit and sense of coherence in facing adversity.

Currently, there are four pilot locations with Pitt-Bridge clubs, Clairton City High School, Steel Valley High School, Gwen's Girls at the North Side, and Home Children's Village.



In the **Clairton City Pitt-Bridge Club**, called Clairton Researchers, students are researching issues that they identified as problems in their community, including caring for people with Alzheimer's disease, prevention of STI's, and the connection of crime rates and lack of business presence in Clairton City. Students are enthusiastically engaged in this research and have developed hypotheses for their projects.

Clairton Investigators celebrate passing their national ethics certification

Students in the Steel **Valley** Pitt-Bridge club are interested in researching three diverse topics. They include smoking cessation as a family problem with parents, breast cancer as a health disparity in poor community, and Vitamin D deficiency in a school without windows. The Steel Valley Pitt-Bridge club is led by Susan Olsen, and Yvette Logan, both high school science teachers at the school.



Steel Valley Pitt-Bridge Club



The **Gwen's Girls Pitt-Bridge STEM Club** exposes girls to the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math and specifically, the impact that they can have on research in health and science. Our STEM Club is currently comprised of girls between the

ages of 13-16 and is located at the main office of Gwen's Girls on the Central Northside of the City of Pittsburgh. Our goal is to heighten the girls awareness and skillset in scientific inquiry, assessment and problem-solving, which will ultimately prepare them to be successful in college and throughout life. Our club also seeks to mobilize youth to be catalysts for change within their families, neighborhoods and communities.



Crystaline Barger leading student discussions at Gwen's Girls



Pitt-Bridge Club at Homewood Children's Village

Led by Marcus Pointdexter and Walter Lewis, the Homewood Children's Village conducted the first Pitt-Bridge pilot club in 2015. Six young men conducted research on improving the awareness of asthma among Westinghouse High School students. During the summer of 2015, the village engaged another group of students in their summer program in the process of conducting community-based research.

The Pitt Bridge Program is collaboration between Higher Education experts in community outreach from the Schools of Medicine and School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit Math & Science Collaborative (AIU MSC) and K-12 schools and community organizations in the greater Pittsburgh area. The pilot clubs are supported with generous funding from the Hive Fund for Connected Learning at the Sprout Fund, and the Grable Foundation.



Club Mentor Training at the Allegheny Intermediate Unit